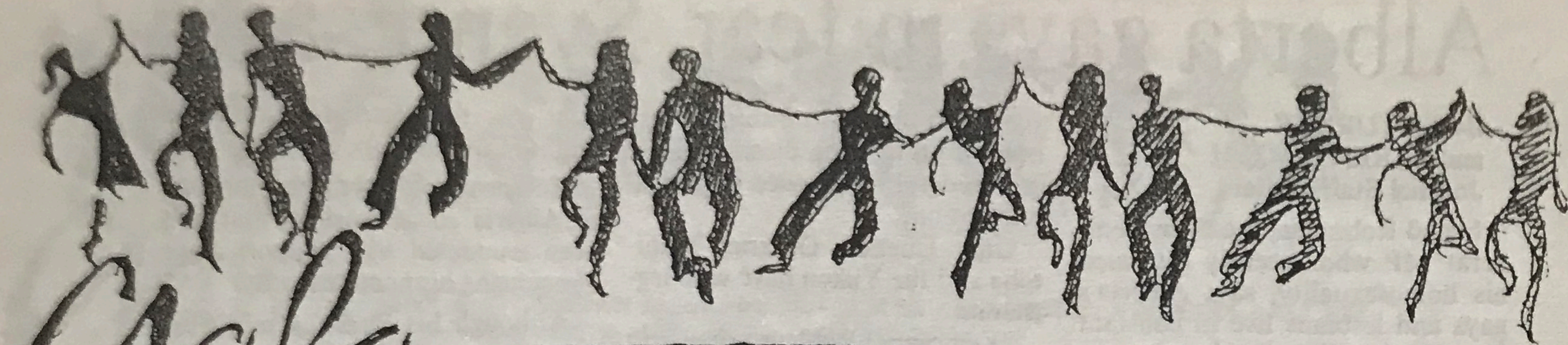




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Aug. 88

A COMPENDIUM OF CIVIL RIGHTS NEWS

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Aug. 03/88 Boots and Saddles - Roast Awards Night
- Aug. 04/88 In Town Show at the Roost
- Aug 05/88 Northern Chaps BBQ - The Roost - 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- Aug 05/88 In Town Show at Flashback - 9:00 p.m.
- Aug 06/88 International Conference - Civil Rights
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Inn on the Park, Hospitality Suite
Buffet Brunch Available - \$7.00
- Aug 06/88 Dinner and Dance - Edmonton Convention Centre - 6:00 p.m.
Tickets - \$20.00 advance
\$25.00 door
- Aug 07/88 Victory Brunch - Boots and Saddles - 2:00 p.m. - Tickets at the door.

Gays have homophobic feelings

GUELPH, Ont. (CP) — If AIDS had not initially shown up in the homosexual population, the disease would be "understood quite differently by our culture," said a spokesman for the AIDS Committee of Toronto at a conference on sexuality.

"The fact that it was early identified with homosexual males has given it kind of a lavender coloring which it has never lost," Stephen Manning, the committee's executive director, said at the annual conference at the University of Guelph.

He also said a study of homosexuality

Some think they're 'failed heterosexuals'

needs to be included in sex-education programs to end homophobia, an irrational fear and dislike of homosexuals.

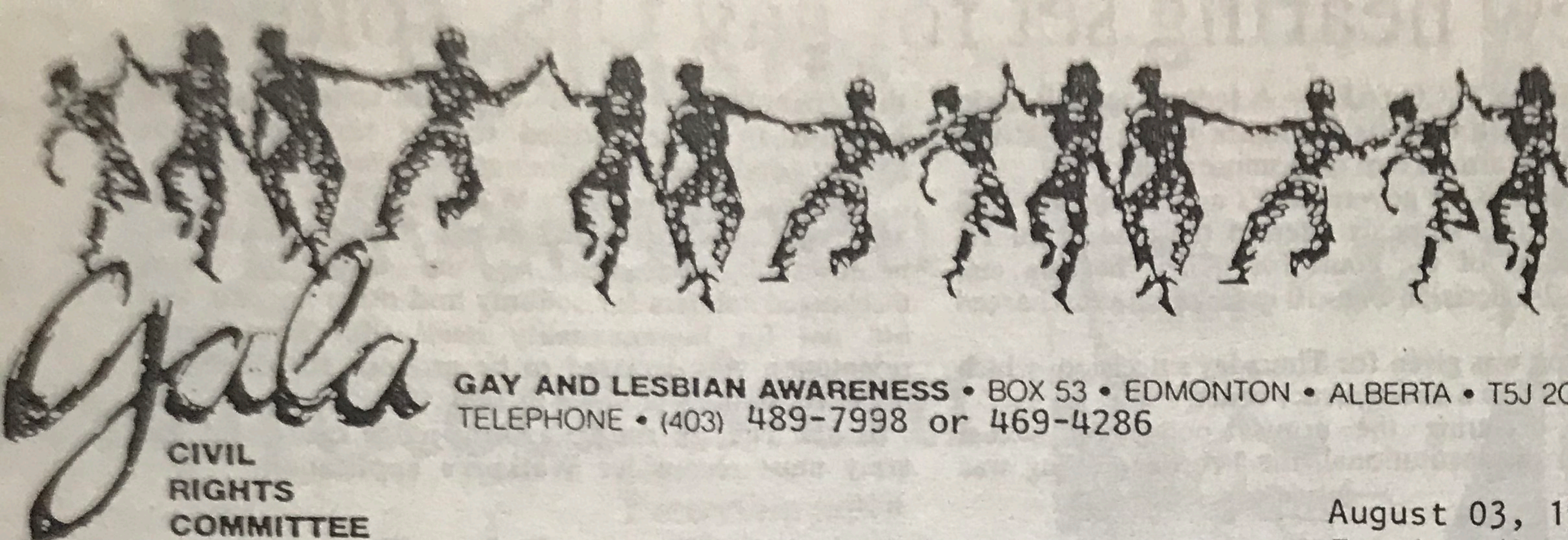
Manning said homophobia has affected homosexuals profoundly because "we are raised to be heterosexual and are taught to look upon ourselves as failed heterosexuals."

He said that acquired immune deficiency syndrome has brought out a vari-

ety of attitudes towards sexuality with many people viewing the disease with relief.

"It's given them the reason they have been looking for to stop the sexual revolution, or even for individuals to stop having so much sex," he said.

A positive approach to sex education is the only way to sell safer sex, Manning said, adding that using scare tactics produces few results.



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August 03, 1988
For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE

STATEMENT: GALA Civil Rights Committee, Edmonton, Alberta.

Recently, an out of court settlement was reached between the R.C.M.P. and one of its officers, Mr. Styles. Mr. styles was initially fired for his homosexuality. He settled for \$100,000.00, his job and full benefits. This was an expensive lesson for the R.C.M.P.

Not everyone who has been discriminated against on the basis of their sexual orientation have been so fortunate. There are many cases of reported discrimination based on sexual orientation, many however go unreported as the law does not protect people based on their sexual orientation.

Sometime ago the Federal Government promised to deal with the issue. To date they have not done so. The Alberta Government seems to want to turn a "blind eye" to the situation as well. Recently, NDP MLA Marie Laing introduced a private members bill in the Legislature. The introduction of the bill and five members of the GALA Civil Rights Committee, was not warmly received by our Government.

Without protection based on ones sexual orientation, many more cases of discrimination will go unreported as those affected feel that they do not have a "legal leg" to stand on.

REF: Pat

TEL: 425-8585

Alberta gays in fear, Svend says

By AL TURNER
and KAREN BOOTH
Journal Staff Writers

Svend Robinson, the New Democrat MP who recently disclosed his homosexuality, says Alberta's gays and lesbians live in constant fear of being discovered.

"You stand the risk of losing your job, your home, of being subjected to violence or verbal abuse" based on sexual orientation, he said in an interview.

The MP called on the federal government to live up to a two-

year-old promise to introduce legislation prohibiting discrimination on a federal level based on sexual orientation.

Only Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and the Yukon have such legislation.

"You cannot legislate a change in people's attitudes. What you can legislate is protection for people who are the victims of people who act on discriminatory attitudes."

He said a person fired from his job in Alberta because of sexual orientation has no recourse to the Alberta Human Rights Commis-

sion or the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

Robinson told a weekend meeting of Alberta social workers that he's been inundated with support since announcing his homosexuality.

Although his Burnaby constituency was vandalized soon after, Robinson said only 200 of the 1,300 letters he's received so far have been negative.

A 23-year-old woman wrote that she was called a faggot, then attacked and beaten as she and a friend were leaving a Calgary restaurant.

"She said to me: 'I can't call the police,'" Robinson said. "She said 'You don't go to the police in Alberta because if you do, and it becomes public, you could lose your job and lose your home.'"

During the official opening of the AIDS Network of Edmonton Society offices Sunday, Robinson told of a Calgary deli worker who was fired after telling his employer that he carried the AIDS virus.

"In a civilized society, that does not and should not happen."

In a later interview, Robinson said his only personal encounter with the deadly virus involved a young constituent who "died an incredibly painful death" recently.

The man's mother contacted Robinson, who arranged to have him admitted to the palliative care unit of an Ottawa hospital — the first-ever AIDS patient in that unit.

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Gays, lesbians get mixed reception

Some guests are more welcome than others in Alberta's legislature, at least if the traditional desk-pounding by MLAs is an indicator.

A private member's bill to protect homosexuals against discrimination was introduced Thursday by the New Democrats, to mark Gay Pride Week.

The bill would amend the Individual Rights Protection Act to include sexual orientation so that homosexuals would be able to fight discrimination through the Alberta Human Rights Commission.

Shortly after introducing the bill, New Democrat M1 A Marie Laing asked the legislature to welcome

five members of Edmonton's gay and lesbian community, who were seated in the public gallery as her guests.

Her request brought awkward responses from some government MLAs and cabinet ministers, who customarily welcome all guests by pounding their desks.

Some, including Deputy Premier Dave Russell, started to pound their desks, hesitated, then stopped.

Premier Don Getty, whose head was down, did not offer any sign of welcome.

Gays, lesbians ask government to protect them

By BOB BOEHM
Journal Staff Writer

A counsellor at a Grande Prairie-area group home was dismissed from his position in the summer of 1984 shortly after his boss found out he was gay.

More recently, the contract of a minister at an Edmonton-area church was not renewed.

Far from having any problems with the calibre of her work, the church told her she was being dismissed because they found out she was a lesbian.

Discrimination against homosexuals is not a new or isolated problem.

Members of Edmonton's lesbian and gay community say more and more of them are getting fired, or being refused rental accommodations or other services, because of their sexual orientation.

"There's no doubt that discrimination (against gays and lesbians) is continuing," said Philip Knight, a member of Gay and Lesbian Awareness (GALA) civil rights committee.

"Many people are hiding from . . . being public about being lesbian (gay or lesbian) in any way at all, precisely because they're scared (of the consequences)."

And as if the discrimination itself isn't bad enough, Knight and other homosexuals are faced with a double-barrelled injustice.

While other minorities are protected by Canadian and Alberta human rights legislation, homosexuals are not.

Neither the federal Human Rights Act nor Alberta's Individual's Rights Protection Act protect against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Alberta's act prohibits discrimination only on the basis of race, religious beliefs, color, sex, physical disability, ancestry or place of origin.

Protection urged

"All Canadians (including homosexuals) should be protected against discrimination on a whole variety of grounds," said GALA-member Tom Edge, who along with other group members has been fighting for an amendment to the provincial legislation for almost 10 years.

"We're not asking for special treatment, we're asking for the same treatment that any other citizen of Canada is entitled to."

GALA has hit a brick wall in the provincial Tory government.

The Tories refuse to consider including sexual orientation as a protected ground against discrimination, ignoring the numerous requests of Alberta homosexuals and two recommendations by the provincially appointed Alberta Human Rights Commission.

"I have no intention of taking that consideration forward to caucus," Alberta Labor Minister Ian Reid said in a recent interview.

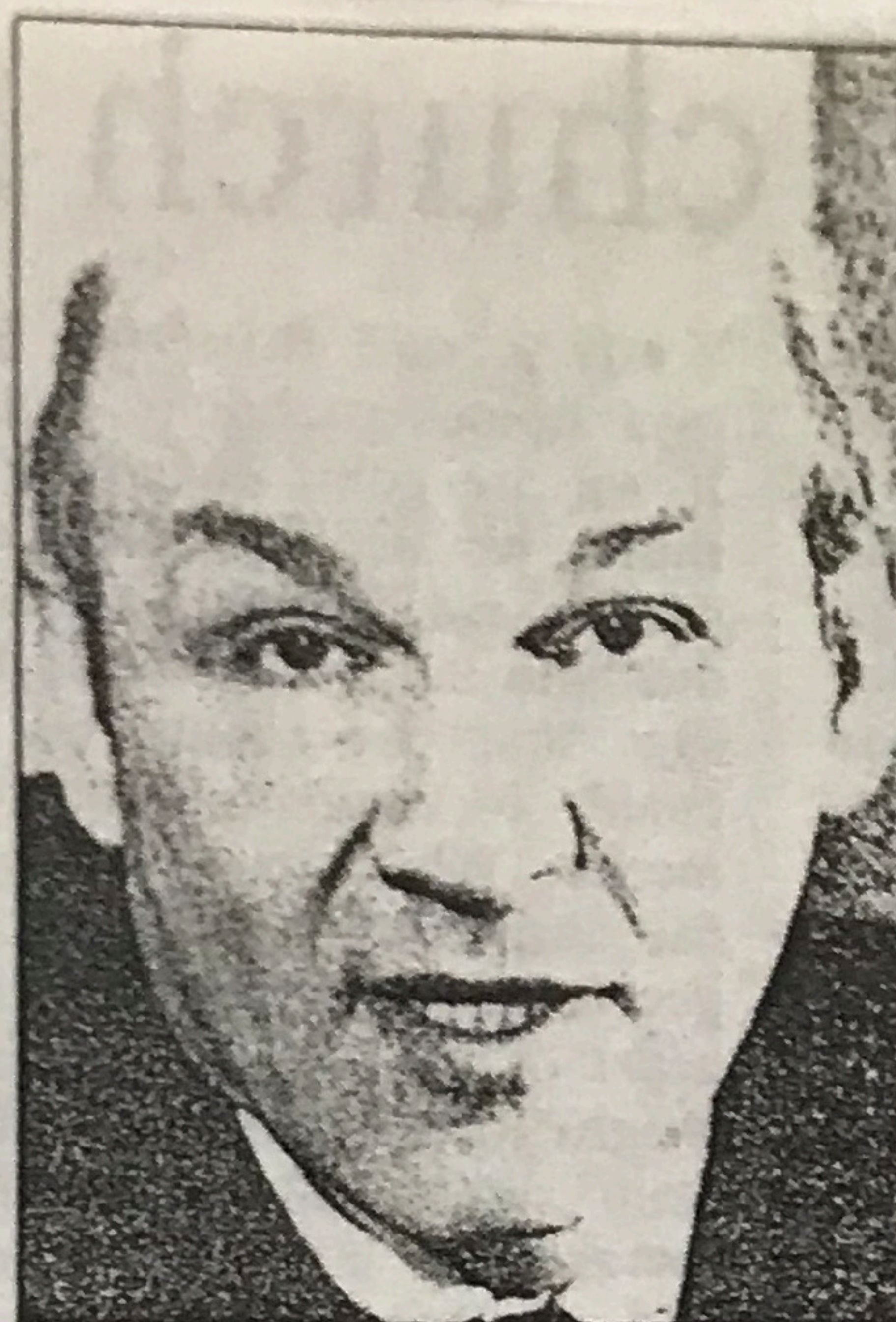
Reid, also the minister responsible for the human rights commission, repeated the argument of the Tories and of his predecessor as minister responsible for the commission, Les Young.

Because you can't tell whether or not a person is a homosexual just by looking at him or her, sexual orientation need not be protected by the law, Reid reasons.

"Homosexuality, pedophilia, sodomy — those things are not visibly evident," Reid explains. "On that basis they should not be accepted."

Members bristle

GALA members bristle at Reid's attitude, saying it's unfair to link homosexuality with sodomy, pedophilia and other deviant



Ian Reid

. . . opposes amendments

sexual behaviors that are against the law.

GALA-member Kate Lea (not her real name) called Reid's reasoning "pathetic," saying the government's attitude "actively promotes intolerance."

"You can't tell by looking at a person if he's a Buddhist, or a Christian . . . or a member of a Satanic cult, yet we have religion as a protected ground of discrimination," Edge says.

"The real issue is whether there's discrimination."

Edmonton New Democrat MLA William Roberts is also extremely critical of Reid's position, calling Tory arguments "excuses" that cover up what is really a political decision.

"It really boils down to the bottom line that they just don't feel they have the support of their own caucus and the party and the electorate," Roberts says.

Even with New Democrat and Liberal party support for their position, frustration is mounting in the gay and lesbian community over the lack of government action on the matter.

GALA wants the Alberta Human Rights Commission to put more pressure on the Tories to pass the appropriate amendment.

Commission reluctant

But commission chairman Stan Scudder says the agency is reluctant to do so because it has no documented evidence that homosexuals are being discriminated against.

"If we're to go to approach the government strongly again in this regard we need to have evidence there really is a problem," Scudder says.

Even if discrimination against gays was non-existent — which GALA denies — Lea, Edge and the others feel they should have the protection of legislation to ensure that it doesn't.

GALA is hoping the winds of change drift westward after human rights acts in Manitoba and Ontario were recently amended to include homosexual rights.

forget is that this (proposed) legislation is also a benefit to heterosexuals," Lea points out. "They forget that heterosexuals can be discriminated against, and if I had a business, I would not hire any, thank you very much."

As well, homosexuals are reluctant to bring information forward because they're afraid the publicity of a human rights hearing will hurt their chances to get another job.

"The other part of it that people

But GALA group members argue that the commission naturally hasn't received complaints because gays and lesbians know they're not protected by the Alberta human rights act in the first place.

Gays in church a matter of 'reason'

Statements purveyed to the public by the media, reflecting fears and suspicions rooted in the lack of first-hand acquaintance and personal knowledge, reveal widespread misgiving and anger at the very suggestion that the United Church of Canada may decide that sexual orientation need not be a barrier to full participation in the life and ministry of the Church.

Individuals and congregations are uttering dark threats about leaving the church if such a step is taken. This would be an unfortunate development.

It is to be hoped, however, that those responsible for deciding this question will do so in strict compliance with reason and conscience, and will resist being unduly swayed by such a "won't-play-by-your-rules" approach. Let the church be the church.

A study of sexual orientation and church life is now taking place in my congregation in the hope of an agreement on an eventual public expression of our shared views. Right now my convictions lead me to make certain statements. These are not final or infallible, but for now, "here I stand." They are as follows:

- Although I agree with the recommendations, I do not think this is the time to adopt them. We should give all those in our denomination who condemn homosexuality more time to adapt to change.

- It is said that "a gay person pastoring a congregation would lead to the corruption of youth, the desecration of the manse, and the general destruction of the moral fibre of the congregation and community." People forget that there would still be committees and structures to see that individual candidates are fit and proper persons to be ordained to the United Church ministry.

- It is said that "homosexuality is a sin," that "homosexuals should repent," etc. How can sexual orientation, which no one chooses, be a sin? Some say that gays are gay by choice, and there is some encouragement to that view from sex therapists, but the evidence is not clear.

- It is said that "the Bible says homosexuality is wrong." If we are going to go by the Bible, we need to change in many ways. The Bible calls for death to those who eat pork. It says that one should be executed for cursing father or mother. Why do we apply biblical authority only to our pet peeves? I believe the mind and heart of Jesus Christ has more weight for Christians than texts from rather obscure religious, social and cultural contexts. Did the original composers of sacred Scripture understand the phenomenon of sexual orientation? Jesus never hesitated to cross the lines which confined those who were rejected and marginalized. Women were seen as inferior beings in New Testament times. Jesus gave them compassion and a new dignity. Lepers were isolated. He was not afraid to touch them and heal them. He was friendly to Zaccheus and Matthew, despised tax-collectors. His example would lead us to obliterate the line between the gay and heterosexual parts of our society.

What is at stake here is not just the liberation of gays, but the liberation of all of us from an oppressive and evil social system. As long as any of us lacks full freedom, none of us is free.

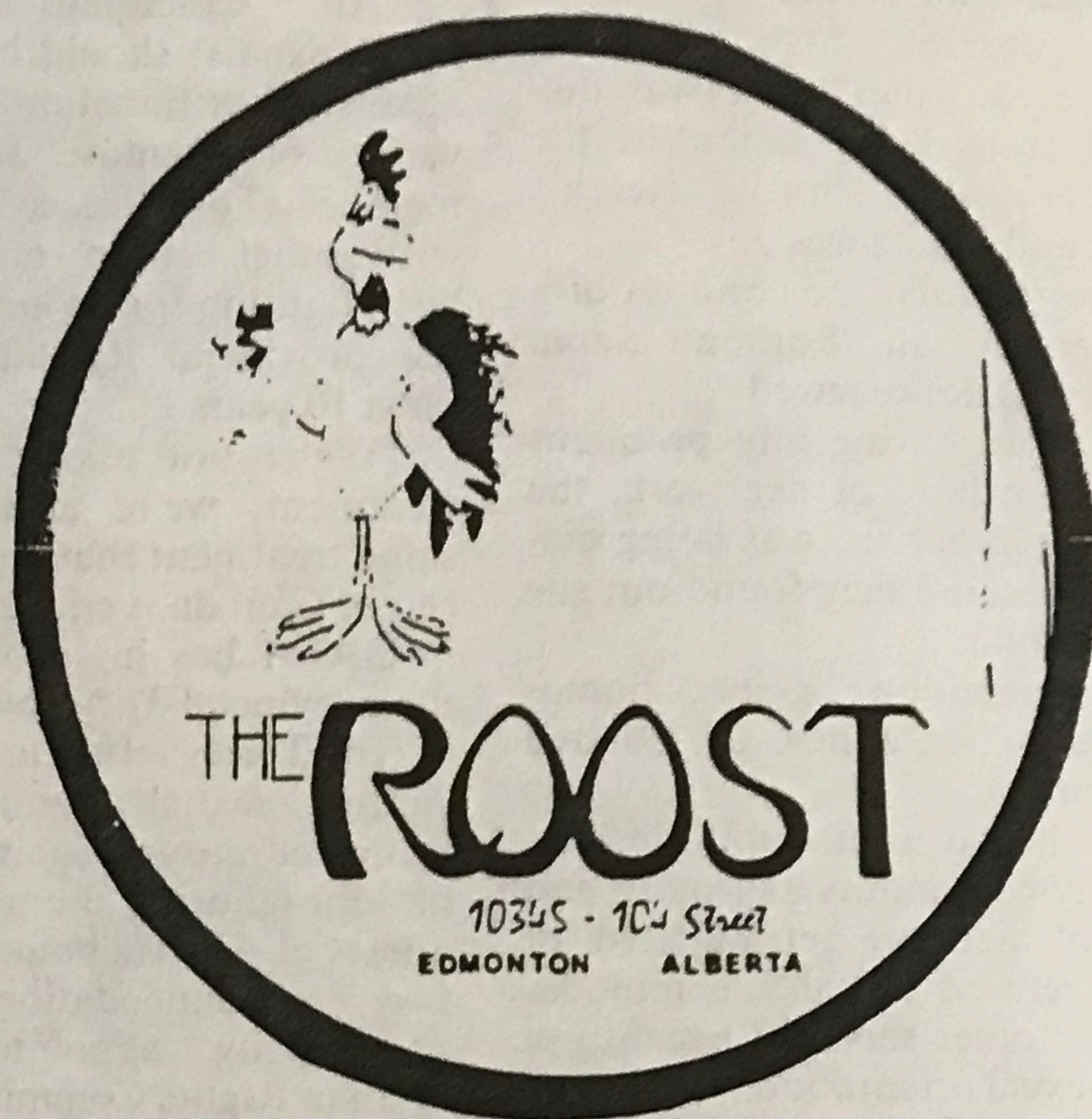
- It is said that "the United Church should not soil itself with so sordid a question as homosexuality." Statistics are somewhat rubbery, but the Kinsey report says that perhaps 10 per cent of adult males are gay. The percentage would be some-

what lower for lesbians. This means that every denomination is quietly ordaining some who are gay or lesbian. The problem is that society's rejection has driven them into the closet. Whatever the upshot is from the current controversy, I hope and pray that we never go back to that state of affairs, but that

what is done may be openly known and compassionately dealt with.

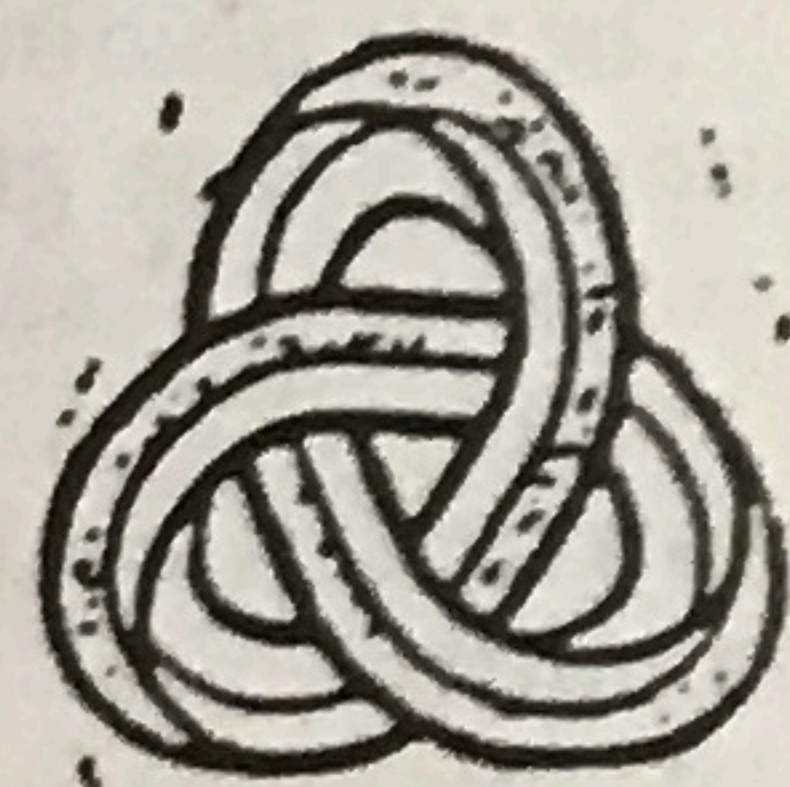
Everyone in our society has a right to be respected and cherished as a fully human and worthwhile person.

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New hearing set for gay U.S. soldier

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A federal appeals court on Thursday set aside its landmark ruling that struck down the U.S. army's ban on homosexuals.

In response to the government's appeal, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals referred the case to an 11-member panel of the court for a new hearing and nullified a 2-1 decision Feb. 10 in favor of a discharged gay soldier.

No reason was given for Thursday's decision, which was contained in a one-sentence order.

Besides declaring the army's policy on sexual orientation unconstitutional, the February ruling was

the first by a federal appeals court that said homosexuals were entitled to the same protection against government discrimination as racial minorities.

The case involves Perry Watkins, 39, of the Seattle area, who enlisted in 1967 at age 19 and said he had homosexual tendencies. At the time, the army discharged soldiers for sodomy and other specific acts but not for homosexuality itself. But homosexual orientation was declared to be grounds for discharge under regulations adopted in 1981.

In the Feb. 10 ruling, a three-judge court said the army must reconsider Watkins's application.

Lesbians not couple in benefits, court rules

TORONTO (CP) — Lesbian couples are not entitled to health-care benefits as if they were married, the Ontario Supreme Court ruled Monday.

Karen Andrews, a Toronto public library board employee, had claimed that she and friend Mary Trenholm were entitled to be considered as a married couple under the Ontario Health Insurance Plan. Andrews said she and Trenholm have lived in a homosexual relationship for about nine years.

Her bid was supported by her union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, but opposed by the Ontario health ministry because Trenholm, a divorcee with teenage children, did not meet its definition of a spouse.

The case has been considered an important test of homosexual rights. Had the judge upheld her argument, premiums for both Andrews and Trenholm would have been paid by the library board.

Mr. Justice Nicholas McRae's written judgment noted the Andrews' argument that the couple "own a home together, share a bank account, are each other's sole sexual partner and have raised children, all of which confirms that they are spouses even if they are of the same sex."

But "I am afraid I do not agree," added McRae.

He pointed out that the Ontario Health Insurance Act defines a spouse as someone of the opposite sex, as do leading dictionaries.

"Homosexual couples are not similarly situated to heterosexual couples," he said.

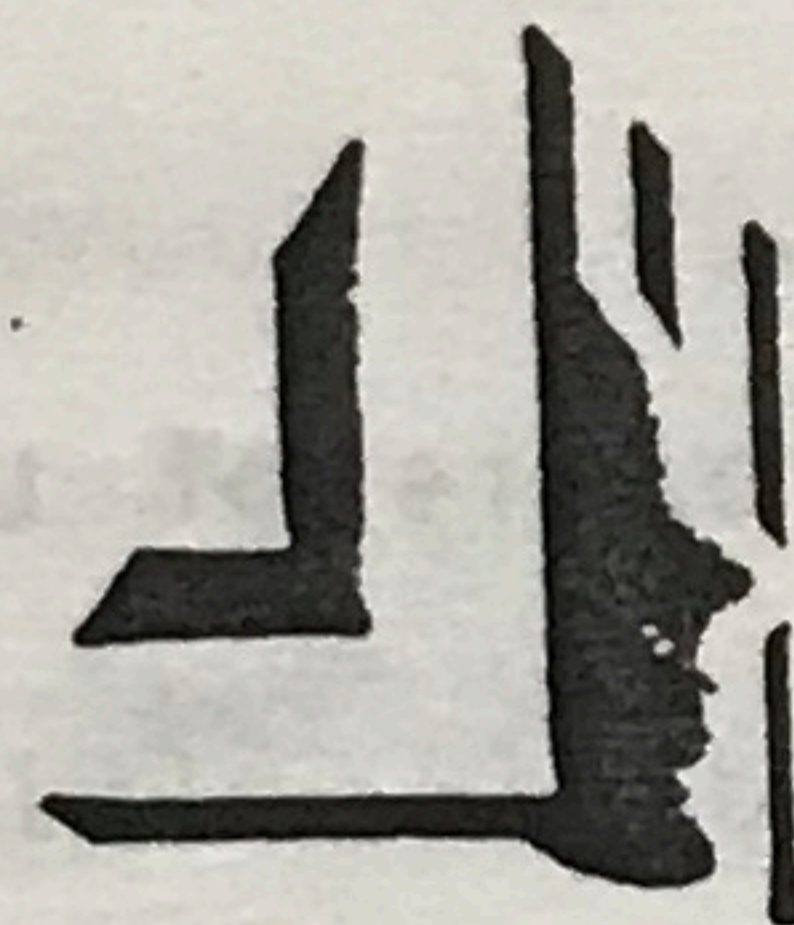
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Big Brothers' ban on gays may face test

WINNIPEG (CP) — Board members of Big Brothers of Canada have been warned the organization could see itself embroiled in lawsuits as provinces amend their human rights legislation to include sexual orientation.

Big Brothers excludes homosexuals from joining.

"I would expect confrontation of some type in the near future," Aaron Berg, a lawyer with the Human Rights Commission in Manitoba, told the annual meeting of the volunteer organization which matches men with boys from homes without a father figure.

Manitoba, Quebec, Ontario and the Yukon all have human rights legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion and sexual orientation.

Berg said the organization is being discriminatory by refusing to allow homosexuals to become Big Brothers.

"You talk of members supporting social institutions, and maintaining non-judgmental relationships, and to that I say amen," he said.

"But I challenge you to search you collective consciences to see if you are practising what you preach."

Robert Tapper, a Winnipeg lawyer, argued human rights legislation has gone too far.

"We have moved from sensitivity, to forcing sensitivity, to an overabundance of sensitivity," Tapper said.

"This causes hardship for those who are not disadvantaged."

He said allowing homosexuals to become Big Brothers goes against the purpose of the organization.

"You are providing male role models — men who have a job and believe in the nuclear family, men who can teach the little brother how to be a statistically normal young male in society," Tapper said.

"To allow a group that deviates in most ways would be like asking the Catholic church to accept practising heretics as priests."

MY TWO MOMS

TORONTO (CP) — All you need is a syringe minus the needle, a sterile jar, a sock — and a donor.

That's the recipe for lesbians who want to get pregnant without using the usual boy-girl method. It's given by a group of women who call themselves, bluntly, "dykes and tykes."

"There's no technology — but then straight people don't use very high-technology methods to get pregnant," Gail, 32, says with a laugh.

Gail, an administrator for a social agency, and her lover Lisa are members of the Toronto support group.

Familiar subjects

At a meeting, most of the six women present are relaxed, down-to-earth and open. Talk turns to day care, baby clothes and the "terrible twos" — subjects familiar to most young mothers.

Psychiatrists and experts on medical ethics are divided on how they think lesbian parenting will affect children. And no one knows how many are in such homes.

The concept is too new for anyone to know if it's "good, bad or indifferent for the kids," says Dr. Joseph Beitchman, chief of child and family studies at Toronto's Clarke Institute of Psychiatry.

But Bernard Dickens, a University of Toronto law professor specializing in medical ethics, says it's no different from homosexual couples raising children from former heterosexual relationships.

Studies on the children of "unorthodox or unusual or even bizarre genetic origins" have given no indication the youngsters are any worse off than children of more usual parentage, Dickens says.

"Courts prefer that children be raised in orthodox environments. But increasingly, both lesbian mothers and gay fathers are getting custody of children as long as they don't flaunt their relationship."

The dykes and tykes group believes it has different problems because the members chose to have babies with their lesbian lovers.

About five couples regularly attend meetings of the Toronto group with their



children, ranging in age from one to 3½. They meet to share problems, support and information. That includes the do-it-yourself advice for artificial insemination — the sock is to keep the sperm in the jar warm — since they say only one doctor in Toronto will inseminate single women.

Most of the Toronto women became pregnant through artificial insemination, using sperm from friends or more anonymous U.S. clinics. One advertised for a donor. Some lesbians pick up men for the purpose.

Reproductive technology is helping the women redefine what it means to be a family, turning legal, moral and social norms topsy-turvy.

Challenging belief

"Family is about relationships, commitment and love," Lisa says. "We're challenging the idea that families have to be one mom and one dad and one dog, with 2.5 children and a house in the suburbs."

"We're challenging that by being a model of faithfulness and integrity and healthy development."

Beitchman's reservations about lesbian families revolve around how the women explain the absence of a father and whether they impose their sexual orientation, consciously or unconsciously, on their children.

The women in the group say there are men in their children's lives, citing grandparents, friends and for one a biological father. They don't worry about a missing role model.

Two-women parenting is more equal than that of heterosexual couples, Gail contends.

"We overlap in every way," agrees Sarah, another group member. "We cook, we change washers and taps — we do everything."

But it's not all as uncomplicated as getting pregnant. Legally, Rachel and the other children have only one biological parent.

The "other mothers" can't adopt the children. And they have no guaranteed right to custody should the biological parent dies or the couple separate.

Robinson's gay stand worth applause

I support Svend Robinson. Anyone who has the courage to make a declaration of his homosexuality for the benefit of others deserves it.

Our society tends not only to prejudice and condemn those who are different, for whatever reason, but it frequently reacts with violence against them, as demonstrated by the vandalism at Robinson's headquarters. Most of these violent people probably act out of ignorance, fear, or perhaps, insecurity.

Robinson's sexual orientation has nothing to do with his ability to perform his duties as an MP nor should it affect that of those around him. What he chooses to do in his own time behind closed doors with another consenting adult, is nobody's business but his own.

I can understand Robinson's feeling he should reveal his homosexuality, and unlike Grant Devine, I have no fear his remarks will

encourage others to become homosexuals. An individual who does not already have "gay" tendencies will not develop them simply because of Robinson's revelation. This person may, with a new found openness and frankness, however, feel a lot less fearful about it. Can anything that helps people to live happier, fuller lives with less apprehension be wrong? I don't believe so.

Many people in our society are gay. It is a part of life we should accept. They exist in all cultures, come from every class and background, and may be black, white, brown, yellow, purple or pink. There are no barriers and there is no way of knowing who is or who is not gay, unless they choose to tell us.

Robinson's statement that there are homosexuals within the Conservative and Liberal parties seems plausible — not at all an unreasonable remark. Does anyone doubt it? It amazes me how our society

shirks in fear or disgust at such a statement.

If more of our representatives were as forthright as Robinson, and showed as much integrity, we would all be much better off.

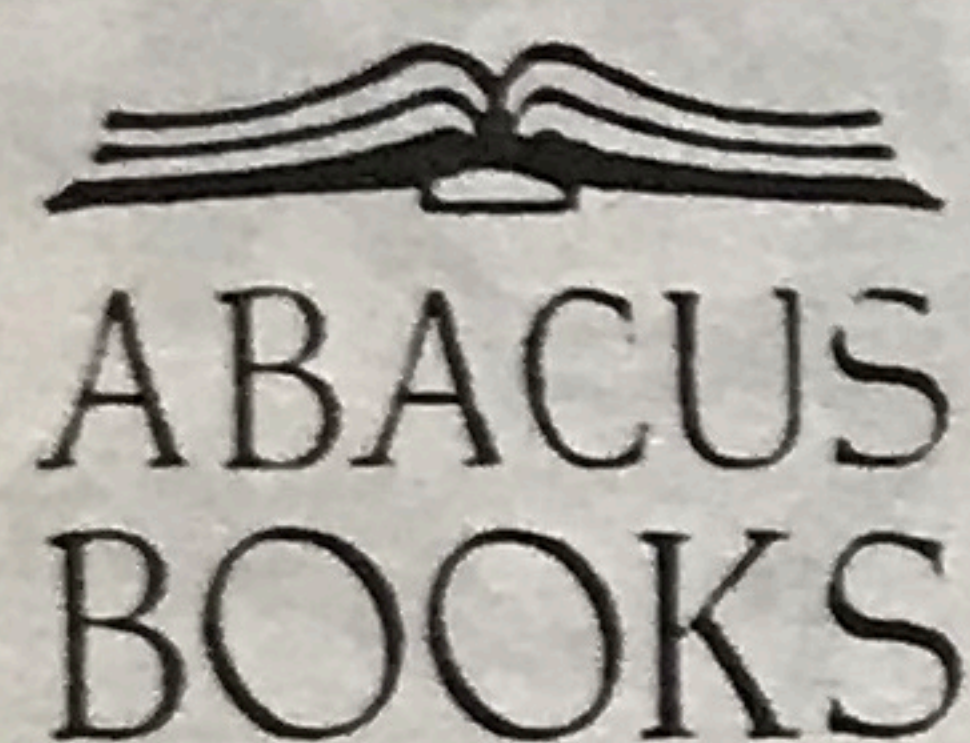
Lesley LeMaitre
Edmonton

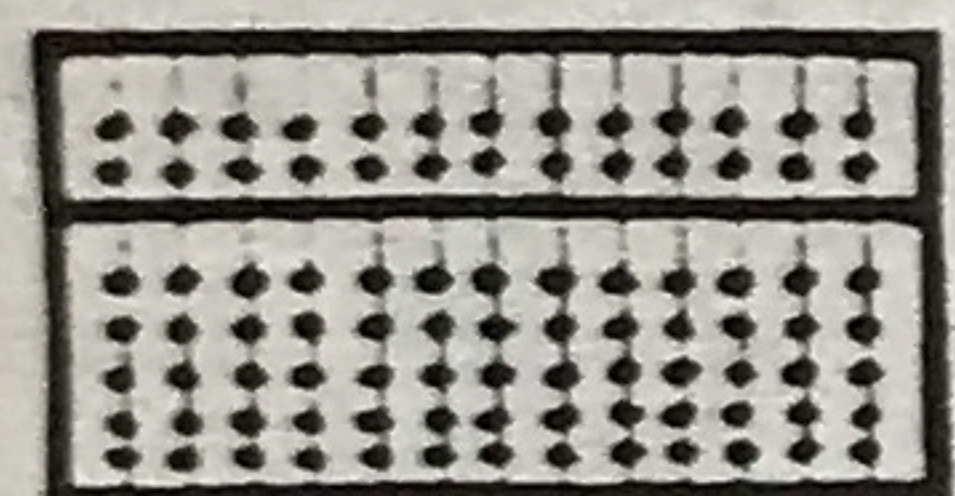
I applaud Svend Robinson's decision to declare his homosexuality. I'm sure it was not an easy one.

I think we should evaluate Robinson on the merits of his political achievements and integrity, rather than be concerned with his sexual tastes.

I see him as a ray of hope for people with AIDS. Perhaps he will be of some help by getting the proper legislation passed so that their needs and human rights will be accorded the same due process as the rest of society.

Eileen Burke
Edmonton


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LETTER OF THE DAY

THE NDP MP from Burnaby B.C. may have a mandate, and as far as I am concerned he may date any man who will have him! However, to do so publicly in an effort to legitimize a lifestyle that the majority of us find personally and morally abhorrent is an abuse of his position. Frankly, I do not care what goes on behind closed doors between consenting adults, but I will not sanction by my silence the public display of this behaviour by any party member looking for votes. The education and moral upbringing of the young is too important to me.

Svend Robinson's private affairs are none of my business, but his public affairs concern us all. What

kind of impression is this role-model giving our children, our future leaders? Correct me if I am wrong, but where will the next generation even come from if this form of behaviour becomes the norm? Too far fetched you say? Perhaps, but look at the billions of dollars being spent to incorporate a language spoken by only 26 per cent of the population, 85 per cent of which are concentrated in one fifth of the country.

One of the no-longer silent majority.

R. Stromberg

(Fine, but the link between language and homosexuality escapes us.)

Women invade BBC newscast

LONDON (UPI) — Four women protesting government policy on homosexuality barged on to the BBC's evening TV newscast yesterday.

But the news anchor continued the live report over the demonstrators' muffled shouts and screams.

As the opening titles rolled, the four rushed into *The Six O'Clock News* studio and one of them handcuffed herself to the desk of anchorwoman Sue Lawley.

For several minutes, viewers could hear muffled shouts and screams as Lawley pushed ahead with the live newscast, explaining: "We have rather been invaded." Although they could be heard, the protesters didn't appear on camera.

Staff soon succeeded in removing the protesters, and the four were taken away by police. They were protesting a new local law that makes it illegal for city and county governments to "intentionally promote homosexuality."

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